



PUBLIC PROTECTION CABINET

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Advisory Bulletin

Clarification of 2009 International Energy Conservation Code Verification of Duct Tightness

As Incorporated by reference into 815 KAR 7:125 The Kentucky Residential Code

Issue: Concerns have been raised to the Department of Housing, Buildings and Construction, the Division of Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning, and industry trade organizations relating to provisions of the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), specifically as to duct tightness verification. The 2009 IECC is incorporated by reference into the Kentucky Residential Code and is scheduled for mandatory enforcement to initiate statewide on October 1, 2012.

The expressed concerns relate to the 2009 IECC requirement of Section 403.2.2 which requires that duct tightness shall be verified. The 2009 IECC specifically provides for either a “postconstruction” test or “rough in” test which can be accomplished utilizing duct blower equipment. At the May 10, 2012 meeting of the Board of Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Contractors, members voted to approve an alternative of verifying duct tightness in systems by allowing visual inspections of joints and seams sealed with mastic or mastic tape *and* not yet covered. The Single Family Dwelling Advisory Committee agreed with this alternative of verifying duct tightness at its June 7th meeting as providing equivalent or superior verification to duct blower testing.

Response: In accordance with Section R104.1 of the Kentucky Residential Code (815 KAR 7:125), the building official shall have the authority to render interpretations and adopt policies and procedures which are in conformance with the intent and purpose of the code.

Visual inspection of ducts and seams which have been sealed with mastic *and* remain available for visible inspection clearly meets the intent of the 2009 IECC verification of duct tightness. The intent of the IECC requirements are not to conduct duct blower tests, but rather to ensure properly sealed joints and seams which minimize conditioned air loss and maximize energy efficiency of HVAC systems. The Department and Division of HVAC, with the support and backing of the Board of HVAC Contractors and the Single Family Dwelling Advisory Committee, believe this alternative clearly meets the intent and goal of the 2009 IECC to improve energy efficiency in residential buildings.

Therefore, a duct tightness test will not be required if the mastic sealing of joints and seams have been visually inspected and approved by the inspector having jurisdiction. The alternative method of duct tightness verification shall be employed beginning October 1st with all other compliance requirements.



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